A

SHORT SKETCH

OF

THE EVIDENCE,

FOR THE

ABOLITION

OF THE

SLAVE TRADE,

Delivered before a Committee of the Houſe of Commons.

TO WHICH IS ADDED,

A

Recommendation of the Subject

TO THE

SERIOUS ATTENTION

OF

PEOPLE IN GENERAL.

MHW
Pa1792.21

"*All things whatſoever ye would that men ſhould do to you, do you even ſo to them.*" MATT. chap. vii. ver. 12.

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The Design of the following SHORT SKETCH *is not to supersede in any degree,* MORE IMPORTANT PUBLICATIONS, *but, on the contrary, to extend their circulation, and promote their influence.*

A

SHORT SKETCH, &c.

VIRTUE, ſay moraliſts, is ſo tranſcendently beautiful, that ſhe need but be *ſeen* to be univerſally admired:—and is not VICE ſo hateful, that the more its features are *viewed*, the more it will be avoided? The traffic in the human ſpecies, particularly as carried on by the Europeans on the coaſt of Africa, has ſo horrible an aſpect, that nothing, one ſhould think, but the MASK, under which it has been concealed, could have prevented all the civilized nations in the world uniting to drive the deteſted Monſter from the face of the earth. This MASK is, however, at length taken away, and the traffic ſtands expoſed in all its real, unalterable deformity. The PEOPLE are now called upon to behold, to feel, and judge for themſelves. The repreſentations of former writers on this ſubject were roundly denied; the facts they ſtated were not only contradicted, but deemed impoſſible; and the authors themſelves were accuſed of ſlander. Now we have a body of EVIDENCE to which to appeal—of evidence, poſſeſſing every eſſential of *credibility*. The witneſſes have declared before the Select Committee of the Houſe of Commons, what they themſelves ſaw:—they had the beſt opportunities of obſervation, and they are diſintereſted. And now it appears, that one half of the tale of human miſery had not been told—aud that every principle that can bind a man of honour and conſcience,* loudly calls for the prohibition of the iniquitous traffic. Hard indeed muſt thoſe hearts be, and inacceſſible thoſe underſtandings,† which ſuch evidence cannot reach!

* Speech of the Chancellor of the Exchequer in the Houſe of Commons.

† Fox's ditto.

The Evidence delivered before the Select Committee of the Houſe of Commons is very voluminous, occupying two thouſand pages in folio. But a judicious Abſtract and Arrangement of the Evidence, on the Part of the Petioners for the Abolition of the Slave Trade,* has been publiſhed, and in a ſhort compaſs, contains the evidence of well informed perſons on that ſubject.

In the PREFACE to this important volume of evidence we read of rewards offered for taking run-away negroes *alive or dead*—of laws being required to be made to prevent the practice of *cutting off ears, noſes, and tongues*—of *breaking limbs* and *putting out eyes*—to prevent *diſtempered, maimed, and worn out negroes* from infeſting towns—to prevent *aged* and *infirm* negroes being driven from the plantations *to ſtarve*. We meet alſo with ſuch kind of PREAMBLES to acts as the following, viz.

'Whereas the extreme cruelty and inhumanity of the managers, overſeers, and book-keepers of eſtates, have frequently driven ſlaves into the woods, and occaſioned rebellions, internal inſurrections, &c.—And whereas alſo it frequently happens, that ſlaves come to their deaths by haſty and ſevere blows and other improper treatment of overſeers and book-keepers, in the heat of paſſion; and when ſuch accidents do happen, the victims are entered in the plantation books, as having died of convulſions, fits, or other cauſes not to be accounted for; and to conceal the real truth of the cauſe of the death of ſuch ſlave or ſlaves, he or they is or are immediately put under ground, &c. Other preambles of a ſimilar complexion, reſpecting the lodging, food, and clothes, of negroes, are here to be met with. We alſo find that run-away negroes, when advertiſed, are deſcribed by the various brands upon their ſhoulders, breaſts, cheeks, and foreheads. A woman is deſcribed with a wooden leg; a man as having both his ears cropt, and another by his noſe and ears being cut off.' Cornwall Chronicle, Nov. 7, 1789. Other inſtances occur within the year 1791.

* Printed by J. Phillips, George-Yard, Lombard Street.

The FIRST CHAPTER contains an account of the Enormities committed by the Natives of Africa on the Perſons of one another, to procure ſlaves for the Europeans —— proved by the teſtimony of ſuch as have viſited that continent,——and confirmed by accounts from the ſlaves themſelves, after their arrival in the Weſt-Indies.

Under this head, we learn that Kidnapping, or as the natives call it, Panyaring, is very common,—that war is made on purpoſe to procure ſlaves.—The king's ſoldiers ſet fire to villages in the night, and ſeize the wretched inhabitants as they attempt to eſcape from the flames, and many periſh, either by the fire or ſword, in the execution of this horrid purpoſe. A boy, who was carried away in the night from his father's houſe, ſays he believes both his parents were killed, he is ſure that one was, and that many others were killed and ſome taken. Various inſtances are mentioned of conſummate treachery employed in making captives. Kidnapping is profeſſionally followed;—large parties go up the country three hundred miles to drive down captives,—they go a wood-ranging, and pick up every one they meet, and ſtrip them naked. The purchaſers generally ſay, they do not care how the ſellers come by their ſlaves. Many are ſold for crimes falſely imputed; the judges participate the profits of the ſale, and are therefore ſtrongly induced to condemn the innocent. Crimes are invented and multiplied for the purpoſe of the traffic. The great men dreſs up and employ women, to entice young men to be connected with them, that they may be convicted of adultery and ſold. The ſlaves are ſeparated without the leaſt regard to ties of conſanguinity, or the pathetic expoſtulations and remonſtrances of nature. When ſlave-ſhips are on the Coaſt, the natives go armed, but are no where ſafe. The man, invited to drink with his neighbour, on riſing to go, is ſeized by two of them and a large dog: and this mode of ſeizure is common.

By the Second Chapter it appears that the Europeans, by means of the trade in ſlaves, are the occaſion of the before-mentioned enormities——that they ſometimes uſe additional means to excite the natives to practiſe

them—often attempt themſelves to ſteal the natives, and ſucceed—force trade as they pleaſe, and are guilty of injuſtice in their dealings. In proof of this charge, we learn from the evidence, that Africans receive European goods in exchange for ſlaves—that they declare when ſhips ceaſe to come (as in times of war) ſlaves ceaſe to be taken. African dealers make the Princes drunk, in order to overcome their averſion to unprovoked war: they furniſh the natives with arms and ammunition, and excite them to pillage.

The term war, in Africa, is uſed in general to ſignify pillage; and when many towns are ſeen blazing in the night, the natives ſay war is carrying on.

The Traders advance goods to Chiefs to induce them to ſeize their ſubjects or neighbours. Capt. Patterſon ſet two villages at variance, and brought priſoners from both ſides. It is not uncommon to make the natives drunk, and then buy them. General Rooke ſays, that it was propoſed to him by three Engliſh captains of ſhips, to kidnap a hundred, or a hundred and fifty men, women, and children, king Damel's ſubjects, who had come to Goree in conſequence of the friendly intercourſe between him and Damel: He refuſed, and was much ſhocked by the propoſition. They ſaid ſuch things had been done by a former governor. Two men, black traders, were invited on board—intoxicated—and captured when aſleep. The Gregſon's people, in running down the coaſt, kidnapped thirty-two of the natives. The Dobſon's boat of Liverpool had ſtolen a man and woman: the captain, on the remonſtrance of Capt. Briggs, who told him, there would be no more trade if he did not deliver up his two captives, reſtored them; upon which the natives loaded a boat with yams, goats, fowls, honey, and palm-wine, and would take nothing for them,—a ſtriking inſtance of forgiveneſs of injuries, and of unmerited kindneſs!

We then meet with as oppoſite an exhibition of character as can poſſibly be conceived: three or four hundred Africans cruelly maſſacred or carried off, by means of the treacherous contrivance of ſix Engliſh Captains in Old Calabar River. But let us "turn our eyes for relief to ſome ordinary wickedneſs"*:—Some conſider

* Wilberforce's ſpeech in the Houſe of Commons.

frauds as a neceſſary part of the traffic—they put falſe heads into powder caſks, cut off two or three yards from the middle of a piece of cloth, adulterate ſpirits, aud ſteal back articles given. Beſides theſe, there are others who pay in bottles, which hold but half the contents of the ſamples ſhewn; uſe falſe ſteel-yards and weights, and ſell ſuch guns as burſt on firing; ſo that many of the natives, of the windward coaſt, are without their fingers and thumbs on this account, and it has become a ſaying that theſe guns kill more out of the butt than the muzzle.

The Third Chapter contains an account of the tranſportation of the enſlaved Africans, and of the method of confining, airing, feeding, and exerciſing them—incidents on the paſſage, and the manner of ſelling them when arrived at their deſtined ports—the deplorable ſituation of the refuſe or ſickly ſlaves—ſeparation of relations and friends—mortality on the paſſage, and frequently after ſale—and the cauſes of this mortality.

On being brought on board, ſays Dr. Trotter, they ſhew ſigns of extreme diſtreſs and diſpair, from a feeling of their ſituation, and regret at being torn from their friends and connections. They ſometimes dream of being in their own country, and when they awake ſhew their deſpair by howling and ſhrieking in a dreadful manner. The women go into fits. In the courſe of the voyage the ſlaves are chained to the deck every day from eight in the morning to four o'clock in the afternoon. They are fed twice a day with rice, yams, and horſe-beans, and now and then a little beef and bread: after each of theſe two meals they are allowed half a pint of water; and are forced to jump in their irons, which by the ſlave dealers, is called making them dance. This exerciſe frequently occaſions the fetters to excoriate their limbs; and, when it is very painful to move at all, they are compelled to dance by a cat-of-nine-tails. The captains order them to ſing, and they ſing ſongs of ſorrow, the ſubject of which are their wretched ſituation, and the idea of never returning home: the witneſs remembers the very words upon theſe occaſions.

* Wilberforce's Speech in the Houſe of Commons.

The ſlaves are ſo crowded below, that it is impoſſible to walk among them without treading upon them. Dr. Trotter has ſeen the ſlaves drawing their breath with all thoſe laborious and anxious efforts for life, which are obſerved in expiring animals, ſubjected by experiment to foul air, or in the exhauſted receiver of an air pump: they cry out—' we are dying,' and many are irrecoverably loſt by ſuffocation, having had no previous ſigns of indiſpoſition. They are cloſely wedged together and have not ſo much room as a man in his coffin, either in length or breadth. They ſometimes go down well at night, and are found dead in the morning. Alexander Falconbridge was never among them for ten minutes together below, but his ſhirt was as wet as if dipped in water. Sometimes the dead and living are found ſhackled together. They lie on the bare planks, and the prominent parts of their bones, about the ſhoulder-blade and knees, have frequently been ſeen bare. No ſituation can be conceived ſo dreadful and diſguſting as that of ſlaves when ill of the flux. In the Alexander (A. Falconbridge ſays) the deck was covered with blood and mucus, and reſembled a ſlaughter houſe; the ſtench and foul air were intolerable. The ſlaves, ſhackled together, frequently quarrel, and make a great diſturbance. Some refuſe food and medicine, and declare they want to die. In ſuch caſes compulſion is uſed. The ſhips are ſo fitted up as to prevent, by net-work, the ſlaves jumping overboard; notwithſtanding which, they often attempt it, and ſometimes ſucceed, ſhewing ſigns of exultation in the very jaws of death. Some employ other means, to deſtroy themſelves, and others go mad. Some reſolve to ſtarve, and means are ineffectually uſed to wrench open their teeth: they perſiſt in their reſolution, and effect their purpoſe, in ſpite of the utmoſt pains to prevent it. When ſeverely chaſtiſed for not taking their food, they have looked up with a ſmile and ſaid, "preſently we ſhall be no more." The thumbſcrew is an inſtrument of torture, the application of it ſometimes occaſions mortifications, of which the negroes die. An inſtance occurs of the cruelty of a captain to an infant only nine months old, which one would ſuppoſe too ſhocking to be true,

were it not corroborated by other ſpecimens of as great cruelty in various parts of the evidence. After a ſeries of tortures the infant expired, and its ſavage murder, not yet ſatiated, would ſuffer none of the people on deck to throw the body overboard, but called the Mother, the wretched Mother, to perform this laſt ſad office to her murdered child. Unwilling, as it might naturally be ſuppoſed, ſhe was, to comply, "he beat her," regardleſs of the indignant murmurs of her fettered countrymen, whom, in the barbarous plenitude of ſecure tyranny, he permitted to be ſpectators of this horrible ſcene—"he beat her, until he made her take up the child and carry it to the ſide of the veſſel, and then ſhe dropped it into the ſea, turning her head another way, that ſhe might not ſee it!"* Another inſtance occurs in this chapter, not perhaps of more cruelty, though of greater magnitude:

A ſhip from Africa, with about four hundred ſlaves on board, ſtruck upon ſome ſhoals, called the Morant Keys, diſtant eleven leagues, S. S. E. off the eaſt end of Jamaica. The officers and ſeamen of the ſhip landed in their boats, carrying with them arms and proviſions. The ſlaves were left on board in their irons and ſhackles. This happened in the night time. When morning came, it was diſcovered that the negroes had got out of their irons, and were buſy making rafts, upon which they placed the women and children; the men, who were capable of ſwimming, attended upon the rafts, whilſt they drifted before the wind towards the iſland where the ſeamen had landed. From an apprehenſion that the negroes would conſume the water and proviſions which the ſeamen had landed, they came to the reſolution of deſtroying them, by means of their fire arms and other weapons. As the poor wretches approached the ſhore they actually deſtroyed between three and four hundred of them. Out of the whole cargo only thirty three or thirty four were ſaved and brought to Kingſton, where they were ſold at public vendue.

When the ſhips arrive at their deſtined ports, the cargo of ſlaves is ſold, either by ſcramble or vendue.

* Speech by W. Smith in the Houſe of Commons.

The ſale by ſcramble is deſcribed:—" A great number of people come on board with tallies in their hands (the ſhip being firſt darkened with ſails and covered round; the men ſlaves placed on the main deck, and the women on the quarter deck) and ruſh through the barricado door with the ferocity of brutes. Some have three or four handkerchiefs tied together, to encircle as many as they think fit for their purpoſe. This is a very general mode of ſale, and ſo terrifies the poor negroes, that forty or fifty at a time have leaped into the ſea—theſe, however, the witneſs believes, have been taken up again: —the women have got away, and run about the town as if they were mad. The ſlaves ſold by public auction or vendue, are generally the refuſe, or ſickly ſlaves. Theſe are in ſuch a ſtate of health, that they ſell greatly under price. They have been known to be ſold for five dollars, a guinea, and even a ſingle dollar each. Some that are deemed not worth buying are left to expire in the place of ſale, for nobody gives them any thing to eat or to drink, and ſome of them live three days in that ſituation! In the ſale no care is taken to prevent the ſeparation of relations —they are ſeparated (ſays the evidence) like ſheep and lambs by the butcher. Making the ſlaves walk the plank, is a term uſed for throwing them overboard when proviſions are ſcarce. Sometimes the ſhips loſe more than half their cargoes by the ſmall pox; at others they bury a quarter or one-third on the paſſage, owing to various other cauſes of mortality: and it is confeſſed by the planters,* that half the ſlaves die in the ſeaſoning, after arrival in the Weſt-Indies. Surgeon Wilſon ſays, that of the death of two-thirds of thoſe who died in his ſhip, the primary cauſe was melancholy. The diſorders which carry off the ſlaves in ſuch numbers, are aſcribed by Falconbridge to a diſeaſed mind, ſudden tranſitions from heat to cold, a putrid atmoſphere, wallowing in their own excrements, and being ſhackled together.

The captains, ſurgeons, &c. who have quitted the African ſlave-trade, uniformly declare the reaſon to have been, that they could not conſcientiouſly continue in it: they ſay, that it is an unnatural, iniquitous, and villain-

* See Stanley's Speech in the Houſe of Commons.

ous trade, founded on injuſtice and treachery; manifeſtly carried on by oppreſſion and cruelty, and not unfrequently terminated in murder Capt. Hall ſays, he quitted it (in oppoſition to lucrative offers) from a conviction that it was perfectly illegal, and founded in blood.

The Fourth Chapter gives an account of the general eſtimation and treatment of the ſlaves in the Weſt-Indies. Dr. Jackſon ſays, that the negroes are generally eſteemed a ſpecies of inferior beings, whom the right of purchaſe gives the owner a power of uſing at his will. T. Woolrich ſays, he never knew the beſt maſter in the Weſt-Indies uſe his ſlaves ſo well, as the worſt maſter his ſervants in England:—that their ſtate is inconceivable—that a ſight of a gang would convince more than all words.

Slaves are either Field-Slaves or in-or-out-Door-Slaves.

The field-ſlaves begin their work at break of day. They work in rows, without exception, under the whip of drivers, and the weak are made to keep up with the ſtrong. They continue their labour (with two intermiſſions, half an hour during the morning, and two hours at noon) till ſun ſet. In the intervals they are made to pick graſs for the cattle. Cook has known pregnant women worked and flogged a few days before their delivery. Some, however, are a little indulged when in that ſtate. After the month they work with the children on their backs. In the crop ſeaſon the labour is of much longer duration.* The ſlaves ſometimes work ſo long that they cannot help ſleeping, and then it not unfrequently happens, that their arms are caught in the mill, and torn off. They are ſaid to be allowed one day in ſeven for reſt, but this time is neceſſarily employed in raiſing food for the other days, and gathering graſs for their maſters cattle. The beſt allowance of food is at Barbadoes, which is a pint of grain for twenty-four hours, and half a rotten herring when to be had. When the herrings are unfit for the whites, they are bought up by planters for the ſlaves. Some allow nine pints of corn

* In ſome eſtates it is uſual to dig a hole in the ground, in which they put the bellies of pregnant women, while they whip them, that they may not excuſe puniſhment, nor yet endanger the life of the woman or child.

a week, and about one pound of ſalt fiſh, which is the greateſt allowance mentioned in the whole courſe of the evidence. Some have no proviſion but what they raiſe themſelves, and they are frequently ſo fatigued by the labour of the reſt of the week, as ſcarcely to be able to work for their own ſupport on the Sunday. And the land allotted them for this purpoſe is often at the diſtance of three miles from their houſes; it would, however, be quite ample for their ſupport, were they allowed time ſufficient for its cultivation. Sometimes when they have been at the pains of clearing their land, their maſters take it for canes, and give them wood land in ſtead of it. This hardſhip ſome have ſo taken to heart as to die. Putrid carcaſes are burnt—if they are buried, the ſlaves would dig them up and eat them, which would breed diſtempers among them. They are ſometimes driven by extreme hunger to ſteal at the hazard of their lives. They are badly clothed; one half of them go almoſt naked. The ſlaves in general have no bed or bedding at all.—Their houſes are built with four poles and thatched. They have little or no property. All the evidence (to whom the queſtion has been propoſed) agree in anſwering, that they never knew or heard of a field-ſlave ever amaſſing ſuch a ſum, as enabled him to purchaſe his own freedom. The artificers, ſuch as houſe carpenters, coopers, maſons, the drivers and head ſlaves, are better off. The owners of women let them out for proſtitution, and flog them, if they do not bring home full wages.

The negroes, when whipped, are ſuſpended by the arms, with weights at their feet. They are firſt whipped with a whip made of cow-ſkin (which cuts out the fleſh, whereas the military whips cut only the ſkin), and afterwards with ebony bruſhes (which are more prickly than thorn buſhes in this country), in order to let out the congealed blood. Dr. Harriſon thinks the whipping too ſevere to be inflicted on any human being: he could lay two or three fingers into the wounds of a man whipped for not coming when he was called. Many receive from one hundred and fifty to two hundred laſhes at a time; and in two or three days this is repeated: they waſh the raw parts with pickle—this appears from the convulſions it occaſions, more cruel than whipping; but it is done to pr

vent mortification. After ſevere whipping, they are worked all day without food, except what their friends may give them out of their own poor pittance. They are returned to the ſtocks at night, and worked next day as before. This cruel treatment has made many commit ſuicide. Cook has known fourteen ſlaves, who, in conſequence thereof, ran into the woods, and cut their throats together. Theſe ſevere puniſhments are frequent. The ſcars made by whipping laſt to old age. T. Woolrich has ſeen their backs one undiſtinguiſhed maſs of lumps, holes, and furrows. They ſometimes die of mortification of the wounds. A planter flogged his driver to death, and boaſted of having ſo done.

Under the head of extraordinary puniſhments (for thoſe already named are reckoned only ordinary), mention is made of iron collars with hooks*—heavy cattle chains, and a half hundred weight faſtened to them, which the negroes are forced to drag after them, when working in the field—ſuſpending by the hands till the fingers mortify; flogging with ebony bruſhes till they are forced to go on all fours, unable to get up—being tied up to the branch of a tree, with a heavy weight round the neck, expoſed to the noon-day ſun—thumb ſcrews;—a man was put on the picket ſo long, as to occaſion a mortification of his foot and hand, on ſuſpicion of robbing his maſter, a public officer, of a ſum of money, which it afterwards appeared the maſter had taken himſelf. Yet the maſter was privy to the puniſhment, and the ſlave had no compenſation. He was puniſhed by order of the maſter, who did

* General Tottenham ſaw a youth, about nineteen, walking in the ſtreets, in a moſt deplorable ſituation, entirely naked, and with an iron collar about his neck, with five long projecting ſpikes. His body, before and behind, his breech, belly, and thighs, were almoſt cut to pieces, and with running ſores all over them, and you might put your finger in ſome of the wheals. He could not ſit down, owing to his breech being in a ſtate of mortification, and it was impoſſible for him to lie down from the projection of the prongs. The boy came to the General to aſk relief. He was ſhocked at his appearance, and aſked him what he had done to ſuffer ſuch a puniſhment, and who inflicted it. He ſaid it was his maſter, who lived about two miles from town, and that as he could not work, he would give him nothing to eat.

not then chuſe to make it known that he himſelf had made uſe of the money. A girl's ears were nailed to a poſt, afterwards torn away, and clipt off cloſe to her head, with a pair of large ſciſſars; beſides this, ſhe was unmercifully flogged, and all for--BREAKING A PLATE, OR SPILLING A CUP OF TEA! A negro, impelled by hunger, had ſtolen part of a turkey—his maſter cauſed him to be held down, and, with his own hands, took a hammer and punch and knocked out four of his teeth. The hand is cut off if lifted up againſt a white man, and the leg for running away. A planter ſent for a ſurgeon to cut off the leg of a negro who had run away. On the ſurgeon's refuſing to do it, the planter took an iron bar, and broke the leg in pieces, and then the ſurgeon cut it off. This planter did many ſuch acts of cruelty, and all with impunity. The practice of dropping hot lead upon the negroes, is here mentioned. H. Roſs ſaw a young female ſuſpended by her wriſts to a tree, ſwinging to and fro, while her maſter applied a lighted torch to the different parts of her writhing body. It was notorious that Ruſhie tortured ſo many of his negroes to death, that he was obliged to ſell his eſtate. Another planter in the ſame Iſland *, deſtroyed forty ſlaves out of ſixty (in three years) by ſeverity. The reſt of the conduct of this infamous wretch was cancelled by the Committee of the Houſe of Commons, as containing circumſtances too horrible to be given to the world. We, however, go on to read of knocking on the head and ſtabbing—of a hot iron forced between the teeth—of a ſlave thrown into the boiling juice, and killed—of a negro ſhot and his head cut off. And it appears, that the women, deemed of reſpectability and rank, not only order and ſuperintend, but ſometimes actually inflict with their own hands ſevere puniſhment on their ſlaves.

The offences for which the before-mentioned puniſhments inflicted are, not coming into the field in time, not picking a ſufficient quantity of graſs, not appearing willing to work, when in fact ſick and not able; for ſtaying too long on an errand, for not coming immediately when

* Jamaica.

called, for not bringing home (the women) the full weekly ſum enjoined by their owners; for running away, and for theft, to which they are often driven by hunger.

Under the head of "Extraordinary Puniſhments," ſome appear to have ſuffered for running away, or for lifting up a hand againſt a white man, or for breaking a plate, or ſpilling a cup of tea, or to extort confeſſion. Others again, in the moments of ſudden reſentment, and one on a diabolical pretext, which the maſter held out to the world to conceal his own villainy, and which he *knew* to be *falſe*.

The ſlaves have little or no redreſs againſt ill uſage of any ſort—the laws to reſtrict puniſhment are a mere farce, and univerſally diſregarded, or when pretended to be obſerved they are in divers ways effectually evaded: beſides, the evidence of a Black is in no caſe whatever admitted againſt a White man; which circumſtance alone is enough to deprive the negroes of all legal protection whatever, were the laws in other reſpects, ever ſo juſt and ſalutary. Lieutenant Davidſon was ſo hurt at the ſevere and frequent whippings of one of the women, that he complained to a magiſtrate, who ſaid, "he had nothing to do with it."

The particular inſtances mentioned in the evidence, of ſlaves dying in conſequence of ſevere and cruel treatment from their maſters, were not puniſhed, though generally known; nor do the perpetrators of theſe barbarities appear to have ſuffered any diſgrace!

If you ſpeak to a negro of future puniſhments, he ſays —"Why ſhould a poor negro be puniſhed? he does no wrong?—fiery cauldrons, and ſuch things are reſerved for white people, as puniſhments for the oppreſſion of ſlaves."

In the Fifth Chapter, it is proved, by ſuch as have ſeen them in their own country, that the natives of Africa are equal to the Europeans in their natural capacities, feelings, affections, and moral character.—They manufacture gold and iron, in ſome reſpects, equal to the European Artiſts —alſo cloth and leather with uncommon neatneſs; the former they dye blue, yellow, brown, and orange.—

They are ſkilful in making indigo and ſoap, and pottery wares, and prepare ſalt for their own uſe from the ſea water. They alſo make ropes with aloes. With reſpect to their moral character, they are very honeſt and hoſpitable—grateful and affectionate—harmleſs and innocent—juſt and punctual in their dealings, and as capable of virtue as the Whites. They are ſuſceptible of all the ſocial virtues—generoſity, fidelity, and gratitude, are allowed them by Dr. Stuart. Theſe virtues Dr. Jackſon enumerates, and adds charity to all in diſtreſs, and a ſtrong attachment on the part of parents to their children. T. Woolrich ſays, he never knew of an African, who could expreſs himſelf, that did not believe in the exiſtence of a ſupreme Being.

In the ſixth and ſeventh chapters it appears that the natives poſſeſs induſtry and a ſpirit of commerce, ſufficient for carrying on a new trade—that their country abounds with, and might eaſily be made ſtill more productive of, many and various valuable articles of commerce—but that the traffic in ſlaves is an inſuperable impediment to opening a new trade.

In the eighth chapter it is inquired, whether the ſlave trade be not a grave (inſtead of a nurſery) of the ſeamen employed in it.

It appears by the muſter rolls of Liverpool and Briſtol, that in 350 veſſels, 12,263 men were employed, out of whom 2643 were loſt, that is to ſay, more than a fifth of the whole number employed, or more than ſeven in every ſingle voyage—beſides nearly one half of thoſe who go out with ſhips are conſtantly left behind.

Capt. Hall (of the merchant's ſervice) ſays that the crews of the African ſhips, when they arrive in the Weſt Indies, are the moſt miſerable objects he ever met with in any country in his life: he does not know a ſingle inſtance to the contrary. He has fequently ſeen them with their toes rotted off—their legs ſwelled to the ſize of their thighs, and in an ulcerated ſtate all over, &c. &c. This account is confirmed by Capt. Hall of the navy. Sir W. Young is of opinion, that a trade to Africa in the

natural productions of the country, would not be attended with more inconvenience to the health of the ſeamen employed in it, than the preſent Weſt India Trade.

In the ninth chapter we find that the ſeamen employed in the ſlave trade are in general barbarouſly uſed. They are worſe fed both in quantity and quality of food than the ſeamen in other trades. They have little or no ſhelter night or day from the inclemency of the weather during the whole of the middle paſſage. They are inhumanly treated when ill, and ſubjected to the fury of the impaſſioned officers for very trifles. A boy, to avoid the cruel treatment of his officer jump'd overboard, and was drowned. A man was killed with a handſpike for being very ill and unable to work. Six men were chained together by their necks, legs, and hands, for making their eſcape from the veſſel—they were allowed only a plantain a day—they all died in their chains; one of them (Thomas Jones a very good ſeaman) raving mad! The evidence proves that inſtances of wanton cruelty, and inhuman treatment in general, are numerous, various and frequent. One man, with both his legs in irons and his neck in an iron collar, was chained to the boat for three months, and very often moſt inhumanly beaten for complaining of his ſituation, both by the captain and other officers. His allowance of proviſions was ſo ſmall that (after his releaſe from the boat, on account of extreme weakneſs) he begged ſomething to eat, ſaying that if it were not given him he ſhould die:—the captain reproached him, beat him, and bid him die and be damned. The man died in the night. This was in the ſhip Sally, on board of which ill-treatment was common. Another man was deliberately, by a ſeries of ſhocking barbarities, murdered.

Sir George Young remarks, that a ſhip of the line might be preſently manned by the ſailors who wiſh to eſcape from the miſeries of the African ſhips. One poor man, when dying in conſequence of the ill treatment he had received from the captain, ſaid (which were the laſt words A. Falconbridge heard him ſpeak) "I cannot puniſh him (meaning the captain) but God will." The ſailors when ſick are beaten for being lazy, till they die under the blows!

" If this be the real ſituation of things, how happens it (the reader may perhaps aſk) that the objects of ſuch tyranny and oppreſſion ſhould not obtain redreſs, and that our courts of law ſhould not have to decide upon more caſes of this kind, than they have at preſent?" It is anſwered, " theſe objects are generally without friends and money, without which the injured will ſeek for juſtice but in vain; and becauſe the peculiarity of their ſituation is an impediment to their endeavours for redreſs." Whoever wiſhes for a more particular anſwer to this queſtion, may meet with it in " Clarkſon's Eſſay on the impolicy of the African Slave-Trade," (page 52) from which the queſtion and the above general reply are quoted.

If it ſhould ſtill be aſked,—" how it happens that ſeamen enter for ſlave veſſels, when ſuch general ill uſage on board of them can hardly fail of being known?"—the reply muſt be taken from the evidence,—" that whereas ſome of them enter voluntarily, the greater part of them are trepanned; for that it is the buſineſs of certain landlords to make them intoxicated, and get them into debt, after which *their only alternative is a Guineaman or a Goal.*

In the tenth chapter it is proved not to be true, what ſome ſay that the natives of Africa are happier in the European colonies than in their own country. They love their own country, but deſtroy themſelves in the colonies, &c. &c. But any compariſon between the two ſituations is as (H. Roſs ſays, tho' on another occaſion) " *an inſult to common ſenſe.*"

The eleventh, twelfth, and thirteen chapters are on the ſubject of negro population in the colonies, and plainly ſhew that the importation of freſh Africans might immediately be ſuperceded, by the introduction of general good treatment, and of certain ſalutary regulations therein ſuggeſted.

The fourteenth chapter is employed to demonſtrate, from the evidence before the committee, that the coloniſts would be able to carry on the neceſſary cultivation of their lands, without a freſh importation of ſlaves, while the generation immediately ſucceeding the regulations propoſed, were growing up to ſupply the vacancies occaſioned by the natural deaths of the ſlaves of all ages, now in their poſſeſſion.

The fifteenth chapter inquires, whether there be not a prevailing opinion in the colonies, that it is cheaper to buy or import ſlaves than thus to increaſe them by population.—And whether the very reverſe of this opinion be not true: namely, that it is more profitable to breed than to import. The reſult of this inquiry is clearly in favour of the *immediate* Abolition of the African Slave Trade. The ſame may be ſaid of the ſixteenth *and laſt* chapter, in which it is conſidered—Whether it be more politic to extend the cultivation of the colonies by the continuance of the ſlave trade, or wait till the riſing generation ſhall be capable of performing it.

Having thus taken a general view of the moſt ſtriking features of the evidence for the abolition of the traffic in the human ſpecies, as carried on by the Engliſh on the coaſt of Africa, it might not be improper to cloſe it with the declaration of a virtuous and wiſe Senator, whoſe indefatigable labours on behalf of the oppreſſed Africans, cannot fail to inſure him the unfeigned reſpect of every lover of freedom and humanity:

"THE ABOLITION OF THE SLAVE TRADE *(ſays he)* IS INDISPENSIBLY REQUIRED OF US, NOT ONLY BY RELIGION AND MORALITY, BUT BY EVERY PRINCIPLE OF SOUND POLICY†."

The noble exordium of another able advocate of the ſame righteous cauſe, muſt not however be omitted in this place: the Houſe of Commons being now apprized of the nature of this trade, having received evidence, having had the facts undeniably eſtabliſhed, knowing, in ſhort, *what the ſlave trade was*, he declared, that if they did not, by the vote of that night, mark to all mankind their abhorence of a practiſe ſo enormous, ſo ſavage, ſo repugnant to all laws, human and divine, it would be more ſcandalous, and more defaming, in the eyes of the country, and of the world, than any vote which any Houſe of Commons had ever given. He deſired them ſeriouſly to reflect, before they gave their votes, what they were about to do that evening. If they voted that the Slave Trade ſhould not be aboliſhed, they would by

† Speech of W. Wilberforce, Eſq; in the Houſe of Commons.

their vote that night, give a *Parliamentary ſanction* to RAPINE, ROBBERY and MURDER; for a ſyſtem of rapine, robbery and murder, the Slave Trade had now *moſt clearly* been proved to be *.

IT remains now to recommend, as earneſtly and as ſtrongly as poſſible, to the inhabitants of the Land of Freedom individually, a particular and ſerious attention to *the abſolute neceſſity, on every conſideration of morality and juſtice*, OF PUTTING AN END TO A PRACTICE SO PREGNANT WITH CIRCUMSTANCES OF TERROR AND ALARM TO THIS COUNTRY.

Much has been lately done, by the united friends of equitable freedom, in circulating throughout the kingdom important information on this intereſting ſubject: but much remains yet to be done. The minds of many have been informed, and their indignation juſtly kindled by the hiſtory of a commerce "*written throughout in characters of blood* †." But the underſtandings, it is to be feared, of a great majority of the people of England, are ſtill unenlightened. Should the foregoing Short Sketch of the Evidence, awaken the feelings, or quicken the attention of any, in favour of their greatly injured fellow-creatures, the oppreſſed Africans,—it is much to be wiſhed, that they will not haſtily diſmiſs the ſubject from their recollection, or ſuffer its painful impreſſions to be made in vain: but ſeek a further acquaintance with the evidence, which the more they examine, the ſtronger will be their inducements to exert every power and fa-

* Speech of C. J. Fox in the Houſe of Commons—Reported by Woodfall.

† Speech of W. Wilberforce, in the Houſe of Commons.

culty they poſſeſs, for the purpoſe of procuring the Abolition of the Slave-Trade. Let no one ſay, "my ſituation of privacy and obſcurity, precludes all poſſibility of ſerving the cauſe"—for the greateſt numbers conſiſt of units, and the moſt mighty exertions of ſtates and empires are but aggregates of individual ability. Next to Members of Parliament, all who have any juſt influence in the election of them, are particularly concerned to conſider, how far the attainment of the great end we have in view may depend upon their conduct. We may certainly conclude, that whoever is not a friend to the liberty of the meaneſt ſubject, is not fit to be entruſted with that of the ſtate: and even thoſe who have no vote, are nevertheleſs comprehended in our idea of the public mind,—nor is any man of ſenſe and virtue, let his ſituation in a free country be what it may, to be deemed of *no account*. Upon his judgment, his voice (if not his vote), his example, much may depend. The diſcovery of truth, the communication of uſeful knowledge, and the exemplary recommendation of virtuous conduct, may dignify a plebeian, as well as add luſtre to a crown. Even a negro ſlave, amidſt the horrors of a middle paſſage, and debaſed by every external circumſtance of degradation and miſery that the imagination can conceive, ſhall divide his meagre morſel † with the inhuman monſter in diſtreſs, who ſtole him from his native country, and his neareſt connexions, thereby returning all the GOOD in his power, for all the EVIL his mercileſs enemy could inflict, and giving an example of true benevolence of heart and real greatneſs of mind, unſurpaſſed in the hiſtory of civilized nations, and worthy of the beſt and pureſt of all religions:—"*if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirſt, give him drink* ‡." Let no one, therefore, think too meanly of himſelf when called upon to aſſiſt in a good cauſe, ſeeing, that from the moſt abject ſtate of human wretchedneſs a leſſon may ſometimes be learnt, and an influence imparted which the proudeſt philoſopy need not bluſh to own. The abolition of the ſlave-trade is an object of ſuch high importance, and ſo nearly concerns every one who has a mind to compre-

† In one of the ſhips we find the ſlaves privately and voluntarily feeding the hungary ſailors with a part of their own ſcanty allowance.

‡ Rom. xii chap. 20 ver.

hend, and a heart to feel, that no communication or aſſiſtance is too *ſmall*, nor any too *great*, to be exerted upon this occaſion.

Some people ſeem inclined to lend an ear to tales of human woe, and feel a certain gratification in beholding the exhibitions of tragedy, or in the peruſal of pathetic poetry, and the like. Even the caſe of the oppreſſed Africans, when repreſented by their favourite bards, or appearing in the form of the "*Dying Slaves*," or the "*Negro's Complaint*," ſeem to poſſeſs, if not charms to pleaſe, at leaſt powers forcibly to attract their willing attention, and to win their ſympathetic regard. Yet the evidence delivered before the Houſe of Commons, containing a true and faithful account of the miſeries and wickedneſs attendant upon the traffic in their fellow-creatures, unembelliſhed by flouriſhes of rhetoric, undecorated with the ſplendid habiliments of poetry, is almoſt in vain recommended to their notice. Should they be prevailed upon to caſt their eye over a few pages of the ſhocking hiſtory, they preſently ſhut up the book—it makes them ſhudder—they have read enough—ſuch horrid barbarities, ſuch complicated ſufferings, are not to be endured even in imagination! But let ſuch remember—"that humanity conſiſts not in a ſqueamiſh ear—it conſiſts not in ſtarting or ſhrinking at ſuch tales as theſe, but in a diſpoſition of heart to relieve miſery, and to prevent the repetition of cruelty:—Humanity appertains rather to the mind as to the nerves, and prompts men to real, diſintereſted endeavours to give happineſs to their fellow-creatures ‡." It is therefore to be wiſhed that no affectation of extreme ſenſibility, or real effeminacy of manners, may diſincline, or diſqualify, for the ſervice of humanity. That extreme DELICACY which deprives us, if not of the diſpoſition, yet of the ability to encounter ſuffering for the ſake of, and in order to help our brethren in affliction and under the ſevereſt oppreſſion, is detrimental to its poſſeſſor, and injurious to the community; it renders compaſſion a painful, uſeleſs thing, and makes beneficence fruitleſs.

To the buſy and the gay "*a great book is a great evil.*" TWO THOUSAND PAGES IN FOLIO, written (like Ezeki-

‡ Fox's Speech inthe Houſe ofCommons.

el's roll) within and without,—lamentations, mourning and woe, ſtand but little chance of obtaining *their* notice —even THE ABSTRACT OF THE EVIDENCE, would detain ſome of them too long from their eager purſuits of buſineſs, or their favourite ſchemes of pleaſure. This HASTY SKETCH will not, however, it may be preſumed, encroach too much upon their time; and well rewarded will the compiler of it be, if it ſhould prove a ſtimulus to further inveſtigation of the Evidence. No one knows what opportunities he may have, or how far his influence may extend, to aſſiſt the endeavours now uſing for the abolition of a trade, the continued carrying on of which, after being ſo fully apprized of its dreadful enormity, may be expected (without the ſmalleſt tincture of ſuperſtitious fear) to expoſe this nation to the juſt puniſhment of PROVIDENCE.

Three nations, Juvan, Tubal, and Meſhech, are mentioned in Scripture * as having their principal trade at Tyre in the *ſelling of men*. This circumſtance has been appealed to in vindication of the African Slave-Trade:—but mark the ſequel. In the following chapter, verſe 18, the Prophet addreſſes the Prince of Tyre thus:—"Thou haſt defiled thy ſanctuaries by the multitude of thine iniquities, by the iniquity of they traffic: *therefore* will I bring forth a fire from the midſt of thee, it ſhall devour thee, and I will bring thee to aſhes upon the earth." A prophecy which has been remarkably fulfilled.

The great leader in the Debates of the Houſe of Commons on this momentous ſubject has declared—"That intereſted as he may be ſuppoſed to be in the final event of the queſtion, he was comparatively indiffernt as to the then deciſion of the Houſe. Whatever they might do, the people of Great-Britain, he was confident, would aboliſh the ſlave-trade, when, as would now ſoon happen, its injuſtice and cruelty ſhould be fairly laid before them. It was (ſaid he) a neſt of ſerpents, which would never have endured ſo long, but for the darkneſs in which they lay hid. The light of day would now be let in upon them, and they would vaniſh from the ſight."

W. B. C.

* Ezek. xxvii. 13.